

GUEST COLUMNIST:

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

So much of our staff wellness initiative focuses on eating right and exercise. Let's not forget that our brains are part of the equation. Good mental health helps promote healthy bodies! In honor of Mental Health Month, we called on our friend **Paddy Kutz**, executive director of Mental Health America of Licking County, to provide us with the following important information:

Your brain may live in your head, but it controls every action and feeling in your entire body. It is the only brain you will ever have -- it can not be transplanted like a heart or lungs, so take good care of it. During May the whole nation celebrates Mental Health Month. Of course, every day we need to be good to ourselves.

That includes eating right. Your brain needs energy to work its best and is about 77 percent water, so be sure to hydrate often (drink water).

Exercising is so important to your overall health -- it changes your brain chemistry in a positive way. Sleeping also is important. While the conscious mind turns off during sleep, other areas of your brain work hard to heal and repair your body, help you grow, learn and remember. You should sleep at least seven or eight hours a night, and for children and youth, up to three hours more.

Just like any other part of your body, your brain can get sick too. We call some diseases of the brain biological brain disorders or mental illnesses. Mental illness happens in every family -- no one is immune. Someone may have a depressive disorder (there are five kinds), an anxiety disorder (there are five kinds), maybe schizophrenia or an eating disorder, or any other kind of mental health condition.

Some of these illnesses co-occur or happen at the same time. After all, there is one brain so more than one thing can go wrong. Many mental illnesses are inherited and a person doesn't have a choice on what they inherit, but you always have a choice on whether to get well or not. We also call these illnesses 'no-fault' illnesses, but it is a person's fault if they deny they are sick or don't want to do the right thing to recover. Having the best possible quality of life should be everyone's personal goal. However, there are those who refuse to recog-

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May LCBDD Staff Member of the Month

Rena Williams

Staff Council has selected Rena Williams as the LCBDD May Staff Member of the Month. She is a fiscal specialist in Administration.

Rena juggles a variety of important financial tasks for the agency, including purchase orders, billing and payments. She assumed these duties about a year ago when long-

time staff member Bonnie Whiteman retired.

"Rena has worked very hard since Bonnie's retirement to make it a smooth and easy transition," explains her anonymous nominator. "She meets the many demands of her job and keeps a positive attitude. She is very deserving of this recognition."

Congratulations, Rena, and keep up the great work!



May LICCO Team Member of the Month

Larry Hall

The LICCO employees with the most seniority has been named Team Member of the Month for May.

Newark resident Larry Hall has seen a number of changes in his work area and responsibilities in recent months, but he's taking it all in stride. He earned this distinction

for his positive attitude and adaptability.

"Larry is always ready to work," explains his supervisor, Workshop Specialist Debbie Neighbarger. "I enjoy working with Larry. He is an awesome guy!"

Adult Services Facilitator Nicki Forrer notes that Larry has worked at LICCO for 46 years, and he still finds it to be rewarding.

"Larry has many friends and enjoys being at work," she says. "This award is very well-deserved."

Congratulations, Larry, for your many years of hard work and dedication.



'Thumbs Up!' to the **LICCO Spring Fitness 5K committee members** for all their hard work. I would also like to give a 'Thumbs Up!' to all the volunteers -- too many to name -- but a huge thank you to them!
- **Angie Watson** (Adult Services)

'Thumbs Up!' to **Kristen Morris** (Service Coordination) for all her hard work while we get a new Team Leader trained and ready to assume TL duties.
- **Chanda Busse** (Service Coordination)

'Thumbs Up!' to **Shelley Hummel** (Administration) for tackling a huge copying job for me. She made 15 copies of the CARF manual!
- **Barb Luce** (Administration)

'Thumbs Up!' to **Gary Smith** (Administration) and **Amber Rowley** (Administration) for tackling some difficult issues for me in recent weeks. Thanks for all your help.
- **Heather Odendahl** (Administration)

Baby news

Congratulations to **Kristin Moore** (Adult Services) and family! Kristen gave birth to her first child -- a son named Abram -- on March 8. He weighed 7 pounds, 12 ounces and is a bundle of joy (of course!), according to Kristin.

Staff survey is here

The fourth-annual "Are We Making Progress?" survey is now underway. A letter of explanation and a link to the survey was contained in an e-mail sent to all staff on May 16. There are a few differences in this year's survey. MEORC is administering it, so there should be no concerns about whether it really is anonymous. The survey also is a bit shorter this year -- we are just asking the questions that pertain to those areas where, in the past, staff have felt we needed to improve. Another difference is that there are two separate surveys -- one for staff (the short survey) and one specifically for supervisors/ managers. The "Are We Making Progress?" survey closes on June 3, so be sure to complete yours soon! If you have questions, please contact **Louise Decker** (Administration) at ext. 6902.

Serving the 'greater good'

The 2011 Operation Feed Campaign was a big success with Licking County Government employees (that's us!) bringing in a

whopping 138,328 total food points. This was good enough to receive a 4th place award in the business/employer category, right behind Licking Memorial Health Systems (248,670 points), Park National Bank (172,602 points), and State Farm Insurance (153,312 points). What an amazing feat! As reported in last month's edition of *The Loop*, LCBDD staff raised 18,919 food points towards the county government employees' efforts. Congratulations and thank you, once again, for your generous contributions! Way to go!

May is Mental Health Month

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nize that their choices to cope are not working in their favor. Some behave poorly, some turn to alcohol and illegal drugs, and some are unwilling to reach out for help. There is never an excuse for bad behavior, but there are reasons. Find out what is going on and take care of yourself. It will help you and those around you -- it's a win-win situation.

The human brain is the most complicated organization of matter that we know. The average adult brain weighs about three pounds. The brain's billions of nerve cells, called neurons, are like a crowded chemistry lab -- bustling with nonstop neural "conversations." With all of that going on in your head, is it any wonder that sometimes things go wrong, that you may have a chemical imbalance?

A better understanding of the brain is certain to lead you to a richer comprehension of yourself. When you are having trouble thinking or feeling right, be sure to tell your doctor. You can use our website at www.mhalec.org for information. It even includes a free depression screening. If you have questions or concerns, please email me: paddykutz@alink.com. I may have the answers or know who does.

Mental Health America envisions a just, humane and healthy Licking County in which all people are accorded respect, dignity and the opportunity to reach their full potential free from stigma and prejudice. Mental Health America promotes Mental Health Month to inspire people to understand basic brain functions, to improve and promote good mental health and wellness, and to achieve victory over mental illness. They are a member agency of the United Way of Licking County and the Community Mental Health & Recovery Board.

May staff anniversaries

**Bridget Finch (5), Bill Godwin (16),
Paige McCorkle (4), Judy Moushey (22),
Debbie Pound (23), Portia Sparrow (28),
Vicki Waterman (15), Louise Williams (23).**

Editor's Note: These listings indicate the staff members' most-recent hire dates, although some have prior years of service to the LCBDD or other public/government entities.

Congrats!

The winners of the Healthy Spring calendar drawing recently were announced. They are:

- **Kathy Thornton** (Adult Services) -- hand lotions
- **Gary Smith** (Administration) -- first-aid kit
- **Daryl Waterman** (Adult Services) -- Family Video coupons
- **Barb Wheeler** (Early Intervention) -- healthy cookbook
- **Judy Buehler** (Early Intervention) -- Food cures book
- **Beth Hopkins** (Adult Services) -- "Chicken Soup for the Soul" book
- **Nicki Forrer** (Adult Services) -- \$25 gift card
- **Courtney Bidwell** (Early Intervention) -- \$25 gift card

The latest healthy calendar challenge -- sponsored by the LCBDD staff Wellness Committee -- now is underway through the month of June. Questions should be addressed to **Louise Decker** (Administration), ext. 6902.

Very important wellness preventative care information

All this year, the focus remains on wellness and preventative care. Obtaining regular examinations and screenings can help prevent future disease through early detection.

To assist you in obtaining preventative screenings, the Licking County Medical Plan offers all preventative screenings at no cost to you (if performed by an in-network provider). You are urged to utilize this benefit.

In addition to preventative screenings, enrolled employees and their enrolled spouses who complete the designated wellness screenings (below) will receive an additional \$200 in an HRA Wellness account. If both you and your enrolled spouse participate, that's \$400!

Please note that wellness preventative care must be billed by your physician as "wellness preventative care."

This is very important -- All screenings must be completed on or before June 30 so that credit is received in your account during the 2011 plan year.



Keep track of your screenings

As a Licking County Employee Medical Plan participant, you can go to a secure website to see what wellness tests you still need to complete, and when they should be completed.

Visit <http://mbaccess.medben.com>. Click on the "iHealth Information" tab on the left column after logging on.

You also can see your benefit plan, claims and pharmacy information. Take some time to visit the site, then schedule your wellness tests!

The Licking County Employee Medical



Plan started a wellness program two years ago. The goal is to control our plan's healthcare costs by helping you stay healthier.

This is accomplished by encouraging all participants to go to a doctor and have certain very important things done, such as an annual wellness exam, a cholesterol screening, and certain age- and gender-appropriate tests.

Studies show that these key tests can detect potentially dangerous medical conditions early -- when they can best be treated. This keeps you healthier and controls the cost of our health plan.

The cost of the tests are covered. All you need to do is make an appointment and get the tests done.

Thanks to those who already have visited their doctors and completed the tests. However, many staff members have not yet had the appropriate tests. We want to keep our medical plan affordable, but we won't be able to do this if we don't do our part.

So, get to the website now and see what you need to do. There are simple instructions on the site for getting your password, so it's easy to do!

New publications coming

Just to keep you all "in the loop" (pun intended), the LCBDD has a few new publications on the way. They are intended to communicate with our families, as well as the greater community.

The May/June edition of *Accent* is due out in mid June. It will feature extensive coverage of the LICCO 5K (below is a sampling of just one of many photos from the event), the People First

Spring Fling, and so much more!

Also in the works is a new *Snapshots* community-specific newsletter that features a Pataskala family

receiving LCBDD services. *Snapshots* mainly will be distributed throughout the Pataskala area. However, we'll have plenty of extra copies to hand out throughout the summer, and we'll post it on our website -- www.LCountyDD.org.

We also are looking forward to the upcoming distribution of the Spring/Summer edition of *Possibilities*, which serves as our agency's Annual Report to the Community. It will be sent out in the ad bag to about 65,000 households in Licking County. As always, *Possibilities* will be available on our website and in each of our three component buildings.



The Staff SCOOP

This month, we put four LCBDD staff members in the spotlight. Each staff member was randomly-selected. They were given questionnaires and instructed to answer any of the questions they preferred. Almost all answers appear in their entirety but may be slightly edited, particularly for brevity. Stay tuned in the coming months as we introduce a new “get-to-know-you staff feature.”



Janelle Pickens

- **Component:** Early Intervention
- **Title:** Speech/Language Pathologist(Contract)
- **How long have you worked for the LCBDD?** Since August 2009
- **What do you like best about your job?** Working with families.
- **Where did you grow up?** Johnstown
- **First job:** Cindy’s Floral Bow-K in Johnstown
- **When you were a child, what did**

- you want to be when you “grew up?”** An ice skater
- **Who was/is an influential person in your life?** Jesus Christ because of His true compassion and love for others.
- **Favorite inspirational quote/word of advice:** “You did what you knew how to do and when you knew better, you did better.” - Maya Angelou
- **Pet peeve:** People who leave their turn signals on
- **Family/pets:** Married for 13 years. Two daughters (4 and 7), one cat (Beaker) and two fish.
- **Hobbies/interests:** Traveling, puzzles, being outside and family time.
- **Favorite TV show(s):** HGTV
- **Favorite musical genre and/or artist:** Contemporary Christian
- **Favorite food(s):** Mexican or Chinese
- **Worst food(s):** mushrooms and sausage
- **Favorite vacation spot:** Disney World or the beach



Kathy McLeish

- **Component:** Administration/Licking County Children & Families First Council
- **Title:** Council Coordinator
- **How long have you worked for the LCBDD?** 2.5 years
- **What do you like best about your job?** I love working with the different agencies and service providers in the county.
- **Where did you grow up?** Outside of

- Granville.
- **First job:** Ponderosa Steak House
- **When you were a child, what did you want to be when you “grew up?”** An elementary school teacher
- **Who is/was an influential person in your life?** My mother. She raised seven children and worked from sun up to sun down, and never had a bad thing to say about anyone or anything. Among many other qualities, I admired her work ethic and her kindness most of all.
- **Favorite inspirational quote/word of advice:** “When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life in such a way that when you die, you rejoice and the world will cry.”
- **Biggest pet peeve:** Crazy drivers that honk at me the second a light turns green if I haven’t let off of my brake and am not moving.
- **If you could meet any person (living in the past or present) who would it be?** Maya Angelou – I admire her conviction and compassion.
- **Family/pets:** I have been married to my husband, Tom, for 34 years. We have two daughters -- Heather, who is a corporate trainer for AEP; and Meghan, who is a coordinator at LACA. We also have four granddogs -- they are a Boxer, a Yorkie, a Poodle, and a Black Lab. They belong to our two grown daughters.
- **Hobbies/interests:** I love to work outside gardening and mowing grass.
- **Favorite book and/or author:** When God Winks by Squire Rushnell
- **Favorite movie(s):** “Where the Heart Is”
- **Favorite TV show(s):** “The Office”
- **Favorite musical genre/artist:** Kenny Loggins
- **Favorite food(s):** Fresh vegetables
- **Worst food(s):** Asian or Oriental
- **Favorite vacation spot:** Sanibel Island, Florida
- **If I won the lottery, I would...** help family members who are struggling financially, save money for retirement and travel.



The Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities now has its very own page on the world’s most

popular social networking site -- Facebook!

We try to post something at least once each weekday, so please be sure to inform the families we serve to search for us there.

If anyone is in need of more detailed information, they can find a direct link to our official website -- www.LCountyDD.org.

There are more SCOOPS on page 5!



Lori Payne

- **Component:** Service Coordination
- **Title:** Secretary
- **How long have you worked for the LCBDD?** A little over one month.
- **What do you like best about your job?** I'm new so I'm learning something every day, but I do enjoy all the people I get to work with.
- **Where did you grow up?** Columbus
- **First job:** Babysitting my brother, Adam (10 years younger than me), and

Landshire Sandwiches.

- **When you were a child, what did you want to be when you "grew up?"** I always wanted to be a teacher or a counselor.
- **Who is/was an influential person in your life?** My grandma who raised five kids, had a strong faith in God and taught me valuable life lessons. I was legally adopted at seven years old into her family, but she never treated me any different and we were very close. When she passed away, I felt my first real loss because she meant so much to me.
- **Favorite inspirational quote:** "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference," and "A great destiny is not a matter of chance but a matter of right choices."
- **Biggest pet peeve:** My daughter texting me from her bedroom while I am downstairs. I also can't stand littering of any kind.
- **If you could meet any person (living in the past or present), who would it be?** I would love the opportunity to meet and get to know my real father. Also, his mother (my paternal grandmother who passed away when I was a small child). I don't know much about his side of the family and would like to explore my roots and ask a lot of questions.
- **Family/pets:** Married to my wonderful husband, Shannon, for almost 11 years. Together we have a total of six kids (his two -- girl 30 and boy 24; my two girls -- 21 and 19; and our two boys -- 8 and 6). My oldest daughter, Bethany, has blessed us with a beautiful grandson, Donovan, and will be having another boy any day now. We are all very excited to meet our newest addition. We don't have time for pets now but someday hope to have a Labrador or a Golden Retriever because we love animals.
- **Hobbies/interests:** I love spending time with my family. I also enjoy nature, taking long walks, reading books and writing.
- **Favorite book and/or author:** Francine Rivers and Nicholas Sparks. I also recently enjoyed reading the book, *Heaven is for Real*.
- **Favorite movie(s):** All-time favorites include "Sweet Home Alabama," "27 Dresses," "The Notebook," "P.S. I Love You," "The Wedding Singer," and "Pretty Woman."
- **Favorite TV show(s):** "The Biggest Loser"
- **Favorite musical genre and/or artist:** Natalie Grant, Mercy Me and Third Day.
- **Favorite food(s):** Anything my daughter (our culinary arts student) prepares.
- **Worst food(s):** Brussels sprouts, lima beans and cucumbers.
- **Favorite vacation spot:** Our favorite vacation spot is a cabin high on the Smoky Mountains or someplace warm and sunny -- preferably the beach.
- **If I won the lottery, I would...** give some away, put some away, pay off my mom's bills and my bills, and travel.



Courtney Johnston

- **Component:** Adult Services
- **Title:** Registered Nurse
- **How long have you worked for the LCBDD?** Three years in June.
- **What do you like best about your job?** Working with people who appreciate you everyday.
- **Where did you grow up?** Indiana, North Dakota and Ohio. My dad was

in the Air Force so we moved frequently.

- **First job:** Babysitting
- **When you were a child, what did you want to be when you "grew up?"** A teacher
- **Favorite inspirational quote:** "Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anyone else expects of you."
- **Biggest pet peeve:** Laziness
- **Tell us about your family/pets:** I have a significant other, Jimmy; two children, Andrew and Ashley; a dog; and a cat.
- **Hobbies/interests:** Reading, hiking and camping.
- **Favorite book and/or author:** James Patterson
- **Favorite TV show(s):** "The Amazing Race"
- **Favorite musical genre/artist:** I like all different kinds of music.
- **Favorite food(s):** Mexican
- **Worst food(s):** Seafood
- **Favorite vacation spot:** I would like to go to Hawaii someday. I have never been there.
- **If I won the lottery, I would...** pay off all my bills, pay off my children's college, and travel.

Attention, attention everyone!

- We encourage you to send us your 'Thumbs Up!' submissions by June 10. C'mon -- recognize your co-workers for all the great things they do! You also can send us any other information you think would be of value to the LCBDD staff. Contact Heather Odendahl (Administration), ext. 6911, or e-mail the information to her.
- We need your nominations for Staff Member of the Month -- don't forget to send yours to any member of Staff Council, or Louise Decker (Administration)! Attached to this newsletter is a copy of the nomination form!
- In the June edition of *The Loop*, we'll tell you about a golf outing that is coming up in August that will raise money for the people we serve. Also, we'll have more SCOOPS -- we just keep getting closer and closer to the end, so stay tuned!

